

Name: _____

Date: _____ Block: _____

“Abandoned Farmhouse” by Ted Kooser

He was a big man, says the size of his shoes
on a pile of broken dishes by the house;
a tall man too, says the length of the bed
in an upstairs room; and a good, God-fearing man,
says the Bible with a broken back
on the floor below the window, dusty with sun;
but not a man for farming, say the fields
cluttered with boulders and the leaky barn.

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A woman lived with him, says the bedroom wall
papered with lilacs and the kitchen shelves
covered with oilcloth, and they had a child,
says the sandbox made from a tractor tire.
Money was scarce, say the jars of plum preserves
and canned tomatoes sealed in the cellar hole.
And the winters cold, say the rags in the window frames.
It was lonely here, says the narrow country road.

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Something went wrong, says the empty house
in the weed-choked yard. Stones in the fields
say he was not a farmer; the still-sealed jars
in the cellar say she left in a nervous haste.
And the child? Its toys are strewn in the yard
like branches after a storm-a rubber cow,
a rusty tractor with a broken plow,
a doll in overalls. Something went wrong, they say.

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Directions: Answer the following questions in complete sentences. Incomplete sentences will result in a loss of points.

1. Is there a rhyme scheme to this poem?
2. The first line of each stanza uses inversion. What is inversion?

3. Rewrite the first line of each stanza that uses inversion below in the order we would say them.
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4. Personification is used throughout this poem. Write below at least five examples of personification.
5. Why do you think the author uses personification so many times in the poem?
6. What simile is used in the last stanza of the poem? What two things are being compared?
7. Who is “they” in the last line of the poem?
8. What do you think “something went wrong” in the last line of the poem means?
9. What type of poem is this?
 - a. Narrative because it tells a story.
 - b. Dramatic because it tells a story but looks like a script with all dialogue.
 - c. Lyric because it shares the speaker’s thoughts and feelings.
 - d. None of the above
10. What is the tone of this poem?
 - a. happy
 - b. bitter
 - c. unemotional
 - d. disappointed
11. What is the mood of this poem?
 - a. wondering
 - b. thrilled
 - c. lazy
 - d. messy